

Money Saving Tips For Fruits and Vegetables



1. Buy Produce in Season

Produce in peak season is a smart buy. Not only is it cheaper, but the fruits and vegetables taste better, too. Check the grocery store ads to see what fruits and vegetables are on special each week.

2. Know How Much To Buy

Resist the urge to stock up on fruits and vegetables. Buy only the amount you know you can use. There is nothing worse than having to throw out spoiled produce. That is like throwing money into your garbage can.

3. Buy Store Brand

Store brand canned and frozen fruits and vegetables are usually cheaper to buy, and they contain the same nutrients and usually the same good taste.

4. Don't Buy for Convenience

Precut vegetables and individual servings of fruits are much more expensive. For example, instead of buying individual servings, buy a large store brand of applesauce and portion it out into individual bowls or plastic storage cups. This will save you money.

5. Go Directly Home From the Market

Fresh fruits and vegetables will decline in quality if they sit in a hot car for a long time.

6. Store Fruits and Vegetables Properly

Some fruits and vegetables taste best stored at room temperature. These include: potatoes, onions, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and winter squash. Store them in a clean, well-ventilated area.

7. Let Fruits Ripen on the Counter First

Some produce ripens best on the kitchen counter. Some examples are peaches, pears, nectarines, plums and bananas. Do not store them in plastic bags because this slows down ripening and may increase off odors and decay.

8. Refrigerate Fruits and Vegetables in Perforated Plastic Bags

These bags retain moisture and allow for air flow. Regular plastic bags can lead to the growth of mold and bacteria. If you use a regular plastic bag poke holes into it with a sharp object.

9. Wash Produce

Wait to wash produce until just before you use it. Fresh produce has a protective coating that helps keep the moisture and freshness locked in. Washing it before storage causes it to spoil faster.

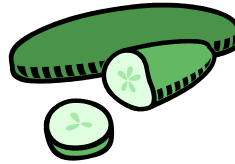
10. Rinse All Produce

Rinse off all produce even if you do not eat the peel, so bacteria on the skin will not transfer to the fruit you eat.



Fruits and Vegetables: Eat a Rainbow!

By eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables (green, yellow, orange, red, blue, purple and white) you're giving your body a wide range of nutrients that are important to good health. Each color offers something unique, like vitamins, minerals, and disease fighting phytochemicals, that work together to protect your health.



CHEESY STUFFED BAKED POTATO

Ingredients:

- 1 large baked potato
- ½ cup plain low-fat yogurt
- 1 cup cooked broccoli
- ¼ cup sharp cheddar cheese, grated

Preheat oven to 425.

Slice baked potato lengthwise and scoop out potato.

Mash potato with the yogurt, salt, pepper and broccoli.

Place potato shells on baking sheet and spoon potato mixture back into the shell.

Top with cheddar cheese and bake for 10-15 minutes. Makes 1 serving.

Nutrition Information:

460 calories, 24g protein, 12g fat, 9g fiber, 500mg calcium



What Counts as a Cup of Fruits and Vegetables?

MyPyramid recommends eating 2 cups of fruits and 2 1/2 cups of vegetables on a 2000 calorie diet. How much is that?

In general, 1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or 100% vegetable juice, or 2 cups of raw leafy green vegetables can be considered as 1 cup from the vegetable group. One cup of fruit or 100% fruit juice or 1/2 cup of dried fruit can be considered as 1 cup from the fruit group.

Here are amounts of some common fruits and vegetables that equal one cup.

1 small apple



1 large ear of corn



16 grapes



1 large banana



8 large strawberries

